

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 9, 2022

Dr. Rochelle Walensky  
Director  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Road  
Atlanta, GA 30329

Dear Director Walensky,

We write to request the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) immediately rescind the public order entitled, "Requirement for Persons to Wear Masks While on Conveyances and at Public Transportation Hubs."<sup>1</sup> Given the widely available vaccines, studies highlighting the ineffectiveness of cloth masks,<sup>2</sup> and a drop in coronavirus cases across the country, continuing a mask mandate on public transportation is unscientific and unnecessary.

On January 29, 2021, the CDC issued an indefinite order requiring face masks to be worn by all people while on public transportation, including planes, trains, ride-shares, and buses. The lack of an expiration date, coupled with the public comments you made last week, stating, "Nothing will change in our travel corridors,"<sup>3</sup> raises concerns the CDC is blatantly ignoring the science and contradicting its own guidance.<sup>4</sup> For example, on February 25, 2022, the CDC dropped the mask mandate on buses or vans operated by public or private school systems.<sup>5</sup>

Additionally, continuing the mask mandate runs contrary to the positions government officials, cities, and industries are taking across the country. For example, the White House and Congress dropped the mask mandates ahead of President Biden's State of the Union address on March 1, 2022.<sup>4</sup> On the same day, the D.C. government dropped its indoor mask mandate for restaurants, entertainment venues, gyms, grocery stores, and houses of worship, among others.<sup>6</sup> On December 17, 2021, Southwest CEO, Gary Kelly, testified to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation that, "...masks don't add much if anything in the air cabin environment. It is very safe, and very high quality [air] compared to any other indoor setting".<sup>7</sup> This testimony came after the airline industry partnered with the Department of Defense and renowned medical facilities to test air quality on airplanes.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/pdf/Mask-Order-CDC\\_GMTF\\_01-29-21-p.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/pdf/Mask-Order-CDC_GMTF_01-29-21-p.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cebm.net/covid-19/masking-lack-of-evidence-with-politics/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/t0225-covid-19-update.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/white-house-congress-mask-mandates-travelers>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/masks/mask-travel-guidance.html>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/coronavirus/dc-drops-mask-requirement-in-restaurants-stores-gyms/2986684/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/suzannerowankelleher/2021/12/17/airline-ceos-congress-mask-mandate-factcheck-flight-attendant/?sh=26c0a9bc6666>

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As federal agencies and industry leaders look to the CDC for science-based, effective guidance, it is imperative the CDC "trust the science" and be honest with the American people. Now that we know we can safely live with COVID-19, it is past time to restore American freedoms and personal responsibility by ending this unnecessary mandate.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to the prompt abatement of the public transportation mask mandate.

Sincerely,



Vicky Hartzler  
Member of Congress



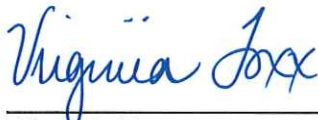
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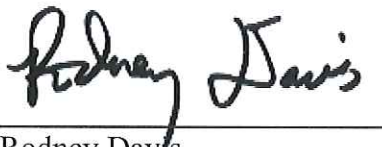
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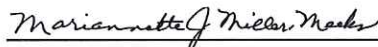
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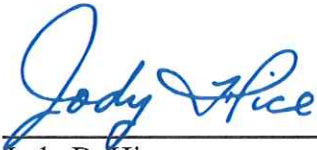


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